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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
16 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

NSA, DIA reviews completed

MIDDLE EAST

MORI C03326468

Situation Report Number 42
(As of 0630 EDT)

THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

1. The action stepped up this morning after a relatively quiet evening with little significant activity. Ground action resumed on the Syrian front with attacks by Syrian and Iraqi forces against Israeli positions near Al Harrah. The Israelis had been pushing in this area on the flank of their thrust toward Damascus in attempts to defeat Syrian as well as the "allied" Iraqi forces. The Jordanian armored brigade in Syria was last reported to be moving toward Al Harrah.

2. Artillery exchanges and tank duels were under way on the Egyptian front over the evening and continuing into the morning opposite Ismailia. In other action, both sides launched naval raids, attacking shore targets in enemy territory. The Israelis report naval bombardments of coastal targets east and west of Alexandria and the Egyptians report a raid in the vicinity of Rummanah behind Israeli lines on the Mediterranean coast. The Egyptians also claim to have bombarded Israeli positions near Sharm ash Shaykh at the southern tip of the Sinai peninsula.

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SYRIAN FRONT

3. After a very quiet evening, ground action in the Golan Heights resumed this morning with attacks against Israeli positions near Al Harrah.

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4. Yesterday, a Jordanian armored brigade was reported to be on the move toward the Al Harrah area, and if it arrives it may possibly participate in any further action in that area. An advance Saudi force has reportedly reached Dara in southern Syria near the Jordanian border. If the Jordanians and Saudis link up with the Syrian and Iraqi forces, the Arabs will have partially fulfilled their objective of an "effective international Arab legion."

5. An early morning Israeli communique acknowledged that Syrian and Iraqi forces had attacked Israeli positions, but claimed that the attack was being repulsed with the aid of tactical air support.

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6. shows that Damascus/International, Damascus/Mezzah, and Marj Ruhayyil airfields were rendered unuseable as the result of Israeli air strikes.

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EGYPTIAN FRONT

9. The Egyptian front was relatively quiet over the evening following a day of little significant activity. Ground action during the evening hours apparently was limited to artillery exchanges and tank duels as both sides exchanged fire over positions established in the heavy fighting Sunday. The Israelis reported that the firing was continuing into the morning in the central sector of the front, opposite Ismailia. The Israelis apparently are continuing local probing attacks against the Egyptian lines and the Egyptians claim to have successfully repulsed one such attack in the central sector this morning.

10. During the evening both sides conducted naval raids against shore positions. The Israelis

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report bombardments on coastal targets, such as radar sites east and west of Alexandria. All boats reportedly returned safely. The Egyptians claim to have intercepted one raid and to have sunk four Israeli boats. The Israeli air force evidently supported these naval operations with air strikes on the northern coastal targets.

11. The Egyptians report a naval bombardment of Israeli positions near Rummanah. This is in the vicinity of an Egyptian amphibious raid yesterday. The Egyptians also claim to have attacked Sharm ash Shaykh during the evening and to have bombarded Israeli positions.

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KING HUSAYN FORSEES FURTHER ESCALATION OF THE WAR

25X1 14. reports that King Husayn is concerned over the consequences by the continued US-Soviet arms airlifts and the escalation of hostilities on the Syrian front.

The 25X1 King professes that the entire Arab side on the Syrian front still appears to be totally uncoordinated, which he feels will result in a mass Arab slaughter. The King has heard that it is possible that a 4,000-man Yemeni contingent might be going to Syria.

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The only way to minimize the damage to the United States prestige and influence, the King feels, is for the US to find the way to an immediate cease-fire and subsequent negotiations for a final settlement. The King believes that Israel cannot afford this war any more than the Arabs. The King fears that in desperation the Israelis might resort to nuclear weapons--which he things they have--in the final stages of what he calls "their holocaust."

IRAN: PRO-ARAB

16. Iran's former indifference to the war is giving way to overwhelming support for the Arab cause as the war in the Mideast escalates, according to the US Defense Attache in Tehran. This support was initially evident only among the lower classes of Iranians,

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but the longer the conflict continues the higher the support climbs up the social ladder. University students are not only voicing support for the Arabs, but are now raising anti-American discussions. The attache says that possible internal disorders could result in severe anti-American reaction.

17. Yesterday the Shah was sharply criticized by religious leaders for not providing military support for the Arabs.

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[redacted]

FEDAYEEN

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19. The Syrian government on 15 October instructed fedayeen elements to pick up an undetermined number of SA/7 GRAIL missiles at the Aleppo Airport, [redacted] The Syrians advised the fedayeen to bring 20 automobiles to carry the missiles which are part of the recent USSR airlift. Soviet experts are arriving with the airlift to instruct the fedayeen on the use of the SA/7s.

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